

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 1-17 are pending in this application. Claims 18-22 have been canceled.

Applicants note with appreciation the indicated allowability of the subject matter of claims 14-17.

Claim 1 has been amended by combining it with claims 2 and 14. Since claim 14 is directed to allowable subject matter, claim 1 is in condition for allowance.

Claim 16 has been made independent and combined with former claim 1. Since claim 16 was previously indicated to be allowable, making it independent and combining it with claim 1 places it in condition for allowance.

The dependencies of claims 2-4 and 14 have been changed to reflect the above-discussed amendments to independent claims 1 and 16.

Dependent claims 2-15 and 17 are directed to features of the present invention which are independently patentable, as has already been acknowledged by the allowance of some of them in the Final Rejection. These claims are further allowable because they depend from allowable parent claims.

Accordingly, this application is in condition for allowance, and a corresponding notification at an early date is requested.

If the Examiner believes a telephone conference would expedite prosecution of this application, please telephone the undersigned at (415) 576-0200.

Respectfully submitted,



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